

TIBIA PRESERVATION IN THE DOCUMENT CONSERVATION LABORATORY

by Stuart Kohler

One of the fundamental principles of the phased conservation approach is to first stabilize and protect the object against further damage. To this end, conservators may prepare preservation formats such as will minimize abrasion, inappropriate flexion and impact damage. Why, then, has this same principle not been conscientiously applied to conservation personnel as well?

The results of an ill-conceived and poorly-executed survey of book and document laboratories indicate that there are precious few conservators, technicians, passing administrators and laboratory visitors who have not abraded one or more tibia(e) [that's your shin(s), folks] one or more times on the pedal of the ubiquitous board creaser.

Many labs have developed adaptive behavior such as storing the wet-dry vac or a piece of furniture in the pedal vicinity, but such protection often gets moved and rarely gets replaced.

Accordingly, the author submits directions for the fabrication of a safety device that requires one piece of phasebox board (approx. 42" x 20"), four sturdy rubber bands and approximately 10 minutes of semi-skilled labor.

FABRICATION:

- Step 1: Cut board to size.
- 2: Make two folds as indicated on Diagram.
- 3: Cut notch in 4" panel, making it 4.5" high and 1.5" deep, located 4.5" up from the bottom.
- 4: Fold board into triangular configuration and apply rubber bands (yes, one at the top, one above and below the pedal notch and the fourth one as aesthetically pleasing).
- 5: (Optional) Inscribe clever descriptive phrases in garish colors, identifying this device as safety equipment.

Install when creaser is not in use; remember to replace when leaving the creaser. And may you never bark another shin.

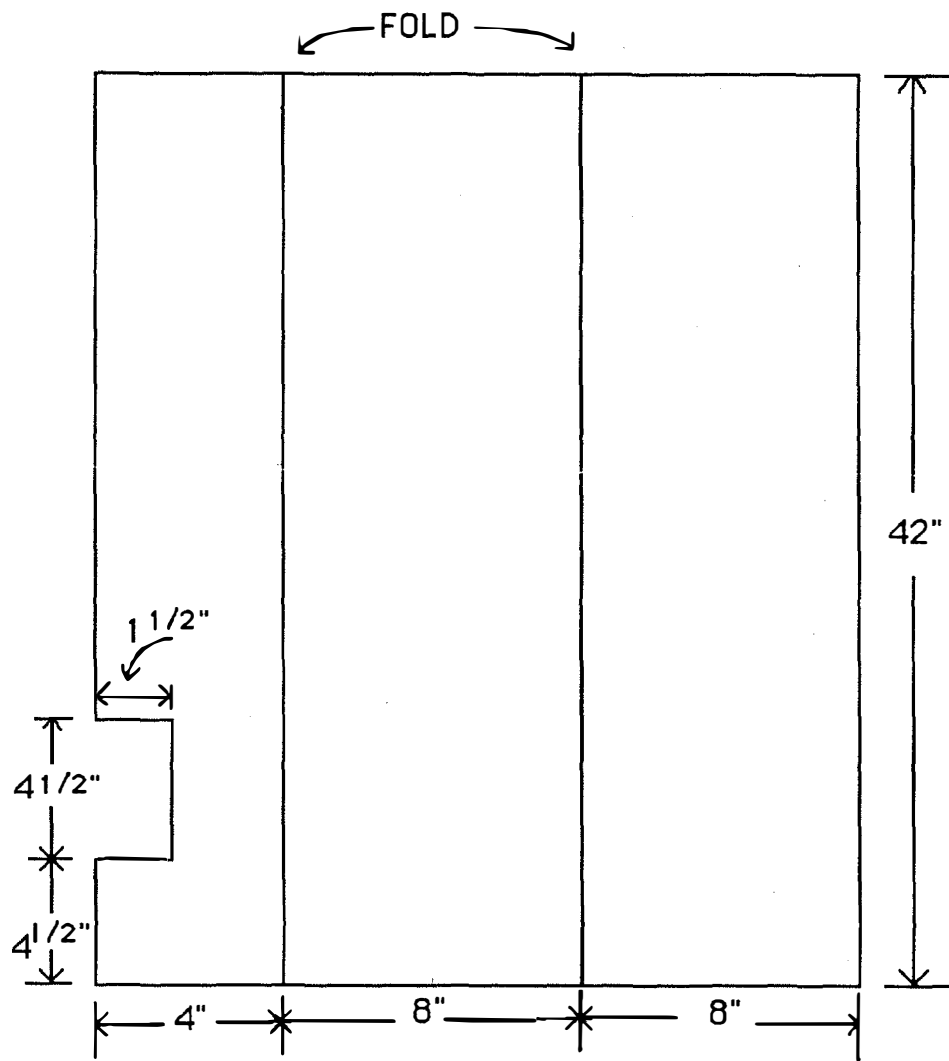


diagram 1

(not to scale)